



## European Consultants' Cooperation Forum (ECCF) in Vienna

- **1st ECCF in 2006: Excellence in Knowledge-Based Services:** Their position in Europe and in the world market will prove essential. Under the heading "Quo Vadis, Consultants?", the 1st European Consultants' Cooperation Forum (1st ECCF) has focused on the impact of the Services Directive, the standardisation of business related services, mutual recognition and liability and professional indemnity insurance issues.
- **2nd ECCF in 2007: Networking for a future in Europe** In 2007, the European Union celebrated its 50th anniversary. In this context, the Austrian International Consultants (AIC) organised the 2nd European Consultants Cooperation Forum (2nd ECCF), in collaboration with the Representation of the European Commission in Austria. The Forum addressed in particular young professionals from all over Europe. They show competence in the field of knowledge-based services specified in Management, Engineering & IT. The morning session focused on the European Union and European Cooperation Models, the afternoon session concentrated on networking possibilities. Opportunities and future perspectives have been pointed out by Key-experts. In form of working groups, specific topics were elaborated together with the audience in order to put networking directly into practice.
- **3rd ECCF in 2008: Consulting & Science – Partners for innovation:** The goal of the 3rd European Consultants' Cooperation Forum (3rd ECCF) organised by AIC was not only to present and promote the connections between consultants, scientists and researchers, but also to focus attention on the rapid development of international cooperation in these two professional fields. Outstanding representatives of renowned international and national scientific institutions as well as innovative consultancy firms have reported in their presentations on the theoretical and practical interplay between these two fields. In the afternoon, interactive workgroups have considered in detail the consequences of the relationships between scientists and consultants for innovation, their current daily practices and future work. The working groups and a pleasant get-together gave both our local and international guests adequate opportunities for networking.
- **4th ECCF in 2009: Profit & Principles – Ethical ways to sustainable success:** The latent tension between the drive for profits and the respect for ethical values in business increases in times of crisis. Calls for ethical approaches to money making, to trade and to consultancy have grown louder following the obvious failure of strategies aimed solely at increasing profits. Our increasingly global economy however leads us to ask exactly which ethical principles should be seen as such, for the multicultural diversity of our world has particularly important consequences in the realm of applied ethics. The 4th European Consultants' Cooperation Forum (4th ECCF) therefore discussed whether internationally active consultants are obliged, can be obliged or should be obliged to obey ethical principles, and if so, which ones. The invited speakers gave reason to believe that competent and future-orientated answers to these questions must be found; some of these answers will doubtless also be controversial. The goal of the 4th ECCF was to create the most accurate picture of the current situation possible, to outline precisely the changes needed, and to draw conclusions that identify ethically acceptable ways as the key to sustainable success for consultants who are active internationally.
- **The 5th ECCF in 2010** discussed on "**Responsibilities & Results – Europe's Consulting Sector in global Competition**": Europe's economy will face ever greater challenges in future if it is to position itself as a unified and therefore strong player that is competitive globally. For this reason, this high-calibre 5th European Consultants' Cooperation Forum (5th ECCF) in Vienna's City Hall focused on what is urgently needed to create an open, common and competitive European market. Politicians, firms, authorities and European institutions are responsible for ensuring that the responses to this development that Europe sees fit to undertake also strengthen the international competitiveness of forward-thinking sectors of our economy. This can and will only ever succeed if the European economy adapts its structures and regulations to the new situation it finds itself in and develops strategies that will allow it to present itself in a balanced, unified and strong fashion in the international marketplace. This makes certain that the insights that participants gain at the Forum can feed into the efforts that are being undertaken in all European countries to develop a common strategy with regard to the export of knowledge-based services that will strengthen the European market.